

DIVISION OF SPECIALIZED EDUCATION (DSE)

POLICY IN PRACTICE WEBINAR SERIES:

CHILD FIND

(Referral for Special Education)





Agenda

- A. Child Find Definition and Requirements**
- B. LEA-Level Responsibilities**
- C. Developing Written Policies and Procedures**
- D. Identifying Target Populations**
- E. Fostering Public Awareness**
- F. Conducting School-Wide Screenings**
- G. Making Referral for Evaluation**
- H. Child Find in the District of Columbia (Part B & C)**
- I. Child Find for Parentally-Placed Private School Students with Disabilities**



CHILD FIND DEFINITION & REQUIREMENTS

Child Find Defined

What is Child Find?

“Child Find is a continuous process of public awareness activities, screening and evaluation designed to *locate, identify, and refer as early as possible* all young children with disabilities who may require early intervention or special education services.”

OSSE Comprehensive Child Find brochure

<http://osse.dc.gov/publication/child-find-brochure>

Child Find Requirements

Federal Child Find Regulations

(a) *General.* (1) The State must have in effect policies and procedures to ensure that—

(i) All children with disabilities residing in the State, including children with disabilities who are homeless children or are wards of the State, and children with disabilities attending private schools, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated; and

(ii) A practical method is developed and implemented to determine which children are currently receiving needed special education and related services.

Child Find Requirements

State Child Find Regulations

3002.1 Provision of FAPE

(d) The LEA shall ensure that procedures are implemented to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities residing in the District who are in need of special education and related services, including children with disabilities attending private schools, regardless of the nature or severity of their disabilities.

DCMR §5-3002.1(d)

Child Find Requirements

What's FAPE got to do with it?

- ❖ All children with disabilities are entitled to receive Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).
- ❖ Child Find falls under the larger obligations of an LEA's responsibility to provide FAPE.
- ❖ OSSE, as the state education agency, has the responsibility to ensure that LEAs are fulfilling their Child Find obligations.

Child Find Requirements

OSSE's State-Level Policy

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) issued the *Comprehensive Child Find System Policy* on March 22, 2010 to ensure that the district has in place a comprehensive child find system for children from birth through age 21, as required in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), its implementing federal regulations, the District of Columbia Code, and Title 5 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR).

OSSE Comprehensive Child Find Policy

<http://osse.dc.gov/publication/comprehensive-child-find-system-final-march-22-2010>

Child Find Requirements

Major Steps in Child Find

- ❖ **Develop Written LEA-Level Policy & Procedures**
- ❖ **Identify the Target Population**
- ❖ **Foster Public Awareness**
- ❖ **Conduct School-Wide Screenings**
- ❖ **Make Appropriate Referrals for Evaluation**
- ❖ **Maintain and Report Accurate Data**
- ❖ **Coordinate with Other Agencies (as appropriate)**





**LEA-LEVEL CHILD FIND
REQUIREMENT:
Develop Written Policy
& Procedures**

LEA-Level Child Find Requirements

Develop LEA-Level Policy & Procedures

- ❖ **LEAs must have policies and procedures in effect to ensure that all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of the disability, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated.**
- ❖ **Policies must also take into consideration unique populations:**
 - **Toddlers eligible under Part C early intervention services**
 - **Homeless students**
 - **Wards of the state**
 - **Parentally-placed private school students**

LEA-Level Child Find Requirements

LEA-Level Policy & Procedures Considerations

- ❖ LEAs must inform parents and the community on the availability of special education and related services, and the methods available to request those services and programs.
 - ❖ How does the LEA educate parents about the purposes of special education?
 - ❖ Is there an official LEA form available to parents for referral?
 - ❖ What is the LEA's first step after a referral is made?
 - ❖ How does the referral process fit in with the LEA's multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) or student support team (SST) process?
 - ❖ How will the LEA conduct regular screenings?



LEA-LEVEL CHILD FIND REQUIREMENT: Identifying the Target Population

Identifying the Target Population

“Effective Child Find activities rely on knowing the population of children who may be eligible for special education and related services, and using effective measures to reach out to those populations.”



Leigh M. Manasevit et al. (2008). *IDEA: New Expectations for Schools and Students*. Washington, DC: Thompson Publishing Group, Inc.

LEA-Level Child Find Requirements

Identify Target Population

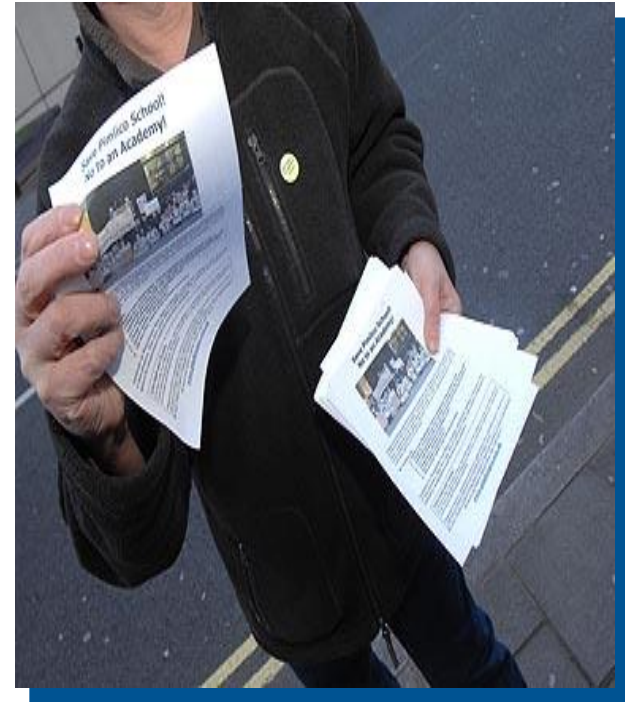
- ❖ **An LEA has the affirmative duty to identify all children who are suspected of having a disability within its enrolled population.**
- ❖ **The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) has Child Find obligations toward its enrolled students, resident students who are not yet compulsory age (3 and 4 year old children who are not yet enrolled in a program), students attending private schools located in the District of Columbia, home-schooled students, highly-mobile and homeless students, and students who are wards of the District of Columbia.**



LEA-LEVEL CHILD FIND REQUIREMENT: Fostering Public Awareness

Fostering Public Awareness

“Each LEA is responsible for conducting public awareness [activities] sufficient to inform parents and the community concerning the availability of special education and related services and the methods available to request those services and programs.”



Fostering Public Awareness

❖ **Public notice of the availability of special education and related services, and the methods available to request those services and programs may be provided through a variety of methods:**

- **School manuals and calendars**
- **Brochures available in main offices of public and private schools**
- **Posting of information in public places (e.g. health departments, doctor offices, grocery stores)**
- **Notices in local newspapers**
- **Posting of information on the LEA's website**
- **Broadcast announcements on the radio or television**
- **Provision of information at parent-teacher conferences**



LEA-LEVEL CHILD FIND REQUIREMENT: Conduct School-Wide Screenings

School-Wide Screening

Conduct Screenings at the School-Level

- ❖ **LEAs should utilize a comprehensive screening process to determine if a child should be referred for an evaluation, the result of which is provided to the child's parent.**
- ❖ **Screenings utilize assessments and tools that are generally applied across the entire student population.**
- ❖ **When screening is applied uniformly to all students, parent consent is not required.**

NOTE: The screening process is sometimes referred to as the Student Support Team (SST) Process.

School-Wide Screening

Consideration of Different Types of Data

- ❖ Progress monitoring data that was collected which reflected the child's progress during instruction.
- ❖ Observations of student's performance and behavior in a variety of settings;
- ❖ Parent/family interviews;
- ❖ Review of attendance and grades; and
- ❖ Health data (e.g. vision and hearing exams, assessment of developmental milestones).

School-Wide Screening

LEA Screening Practices for Academics

❖ Questions to determine effective LEA screening practices for academics for all students:

- Is appropriate instruction in the general education setting being delivered by qualified personnel?
- Are instruction and interventions being provided at varying intensity levels?
- Is progress monitoring data collected which reflects a child's progress during instruction?

“The screening of a student by a teacher or specialist to determine appropriate instructional strategies for curriculum implementation shall not be considered to be an evaluation for eligibility for special education and related services.”

34 CFR § 300.302

School-Wide Screening

LEA Screening Practices for Behavioral Health

❖ Recognition of Additional Needs

- The fact that a student needs additional educational and behavioral support to achieve in a general education class may raise the possibility that the child needs to be assessed for special education.

❖ South Capitol Street Tragedy Memorial Act of 2011

- School-based behavioral health screening to identify at-risk youth
- Universal Health Certification: checklist of what health evaluations must be completed before a child starts school

LEA-LEVEL CHILD FIND REQUIREMENT: Referral Process (data, documentation, and timeline)

Referral Process

Difference between Screening and Referral

Screening	Referral
School-wide implementation.	Specific and unique to one student.
May provide data that leads to a referral for a particular student.	The first step of the evaluation process to determine whether a student is a student with a disability.
Does NOT trigger the 120 day timeline for evaluation.	Triggers the 120 day timeline for evaluation.

- ❖ **A referral for an initial evaluation should be made when there is data that indicates that a child may be a child with a disability.**

Referral Process

Definition of Referral

- ❖ **Referral: a written documentation provided by the child's parent, or other defined by DCMR §3004.1, which clearly states why it is thought that the child may have a disability.**
 - **Must be submitted to the building principal or designee of the child's home school or public charter school on a form provided by the school at the time of the parent's referral. (5 DCMR §3004.1)**
 - **Must be in writing and address specific academic or behavior concerns.**

Referral Process

Sources of Referral

A referral, which shall state why it is thought that the child may have a disability may be made by the following:

- (1) A child's parent or person in a parental relationship; or**
- (2) A child (self-referral) who is between the ages of eighteen (18) and twenty-two (22) years of age or an emancipated minor who is eligible to attend the LEA; or**
- (3) A professional staff employee of the LEA; or**
- (4) A staff member of a public agency who has direct knowledge of the child.**

Referral Process

Other Sources of Referral

- ❖ Parent or person in parental relationship
- ❖ Staff of public agency with direct knowledge of child
- ❖ Educator or administrator
- ❖ Professional at LEA
- ❖ Physician
- ❖ Child care provider
- ❖ Preschool provider
- ❖ Community Organization



Part B Initial Evaluation/Reevaluation Policy, p. 12. See also 34 C.F.R. § 300.301(b).

Referral Process

Timelines for Referral & Evaluation Process

- ❖ **Clock starts ticking with a written referral.**
 - **Verbal referrals: LEAs are required to assist parents to translate a verbal referral into a written referral.**
- ❖ **The LEA must complete an initial evaluation, including the determination of eligibility, of a child suspected of having a disability within 120 calendar days of receiving the written referral.**
- ❖ **Part C evaluations for infants and toddlers:**
 - **Evaluation and eligibility meeting conducted within 45 days from referral.**
 - **Referral comes from “primary referral source.”**
 - **Parents, hospitals, physicians, child care providers, LEAs, public health facilities, government agencies serving children and families, etc.**

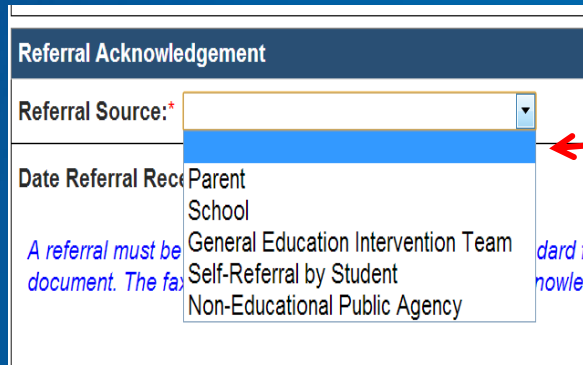
Referral Process

Exception to the Initial Evaluation Timeline

- ❖ **The 120 day timeline does not apply to an LEA if:**
 - The parent of a child repeatedly fails or refuses to produce the child for the evaluation;
 - The parent fails or refuses to respond to a request for consent for the evaluation; or
 - A child enrolls in a school of another LEA after the 120 day timeline has begun, and prior to the determination by the child's previous LEA as to whether the child is a child with a disability under this policy.

Referral Process

Creating a Referral Acknowledgement Letter in SEDS



Referral Acknowledgement

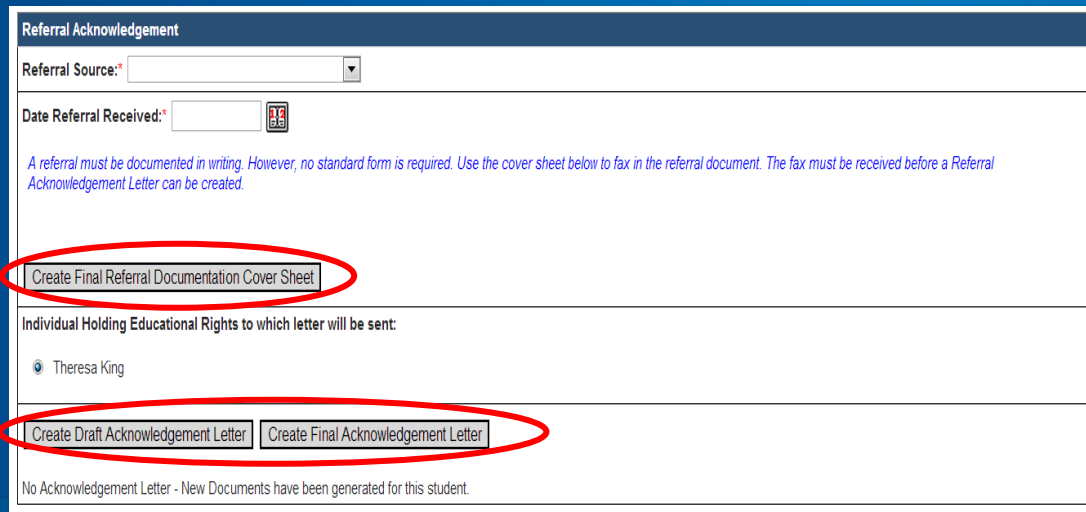
Referral Source:*

Date Referral Received:

A referral must be documented in writing. However, no standard form is required. Use the cover sheet below to fax in the referral document. The fax must be received before a Referral Acknowledgement Letter can be created.

Once the LEA receives or makes a referral, the LEA must enter the referral source and the date of the referral into SEDS.

The LEA then creates a referral cover sheet and uses it to upload the written referral into SEDS.



Referral Acknowledgement

Referral Source:*

Date Referral Received:*

A referral must be documented in writing. However, no standard form is required. Use the cover sheet below to fax in the referral document. The fax must be received before a Referral Acknowledgement Letter can be created.

[Create Final Referral Documentation Cover Sheet](#)

Individual Holding Educational Rights to which letter will be sent:

☒ Theresa King

[Create Draft Acknowledgement Letter](#) [Create Final Acknowledgement Letter](#)

No Acknowledgement Letter - New Documents have been generated for this student.

The LEA then creates a letter in SEDS, which will be sent to the parent (person holding educational rights), acknowledging the receipt of referral.

Referral Process

Capture the Written Referral in SEDS

Referral Acknowledgement for Lucy Late1221

Student Information								
Student Name: Lucy Late1221	Local ID:	State USI: LUCYLATE1221	Date of Birth: 06/01/2004	Student Grade:				
LEA / School Information								
LEA of Enrollment: Docs Demo	School / Site: Academy 810		Case Manager: New Trainer1221					
Referral Acknowledgement								
Referral Source:*								
Date Referral Received:* 01/15/2008								
<i>A referral must be documented in writing. However, no standard form is required. Use the cover sheet below to fax in the referral document. The fax must be received before a Referral Acknowledgement Letter can be created.</i>								
Create Final Referral Documentation Cover Sheet								
Date Generated	Document Type	EasyFax	Fax Received					
02/15/2013	Referral Acknowledgement Documentation Cover Sheet	Fax	02/15/2013					
Individual Holding Educational Rights to which letter will be sent:								
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Mom Late1221								
Create Draft Acknowledgement Letter Create Final Acknowledgement Letter								
No Acknowledgement Letter - New Documents have been generated for this student.								

[<< Back](#)[Save](#)[Save & Continue >>](#)

SEDS Referral Acknowledgement

Elements of a Written Referral

Referral Acknowledgement Documentation Cover Sheet

Student Name: Preview Student1
Local Student ID:
State USI: STUDENT1
Grade: 9th Grade
School Name: Closed - Van Ness Es
Date of Birth: 06/01/1995

Note: A written referral must include the following elements:

- The request itself,
- who the request was made to (name and title of school staff person),
- the name and the signature of the person referring the student, and
- the date of the request.

Referral Process

SAMPLE REFERRAL FORM SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES

ABC LEA (Name of LEA)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initial		<input type="checkbox"/> Reevaluation	
Name of child (Last, first, middle) <u>Late, Lucy</u>	Date of birth <u>10/18/1995</u>	Grade <u>12th</u>	School <u>ABC HS</u>
Name of parent or legal guardian <u>Mom</u>	Address (Street, city, state, zip)		
Telephone area/no.	Person making referral/title <u>ABC Teacher</u>	Date parent was notified of intent to refer (if initial referral made by someone other than parent)	
Method of notifying parent of intent to refer <input type="checkbox"/> Conference <input type="checkbox"/> Phone call <input type="checkbox"/> Written		Is an interpreter needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Parent's or adult student's native language or other primary mode of communication if other than English (specify):			
Child's native language or other primary mode of communication if other than English (specify):			

Date of receipt of referral by LEA _____ (month, day, year)

(Note: the date the LEA receives the referral begins the 120 calendar-day timeline in which to complete the evaluation process. Upon review of existing information, LEA must notify the parents of whether additional assessments are needed to move forward with evaluation.)

State reason(s) you believe this child has a disability (impairment and a need for special education) - such as academic and non-academic performance and medical information; any special programs, services, interventions used to address this student's needs and the results of those interventions, etc.

ACTUAL WRITTEN REFERRAL

- 1) Written format
- 2) Form provided by LEA/school
- 3) Must fax into SEDS

Docs Demo
810 First St. NE
Washington, DC 20001

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF REFERRAL TO SPECIAL EDUCATION LETTER

12/29/2011

Jane Smith
12 high lane
Washington, DC, 20001

RE: Referral Acknowledgement for Test Student
Referral Source: School
Referral Received on 12/01/2011

Dear Jane Smith,

On 12/01/2011, Closed Van Ness received a referral for an initial evaluation of your child, Test Student, to determine whether he/she is a child with a disability. The next step is for school staff to review various educational and behavioral data and determine whether to proceed with an evaluation. We will then prepare the Prior Written Notice indicating the next step in the evaluation process. In some cases, we may determine that there is not enough evidence to support conducting an initial evaluation and would, therefore, propose alternative options to special education.

To ensure that you understand your rights, Closed Van Ness is required to provide a copy of the enclosed Procedural Safeguards Notice. If you have questions about this letter or your rights, please contact at 202-555-1234. You may also contact Advocates for Justice (AJE), the District of Columbia parent resource center, for more information. The AJE may be reached by phone at (202) 678-8060 or at www.aje-dc.org/information.html.

Sincerely,

Closed Van Ness
Washington, DC 20009

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF REFERRAL

- 1) Form generated in SEDS
- 2) Uses referral date listed in original written referral



CHILD FIND IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Part B & Part C

Child Find in the District of Columbia

IDEA: Part C versus Part B

Part C: Infants & Toddlers

- Early Intervention
- Birth up to 3 years old
- Programs ran by OSSE
- Strong Start campaign
- Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)



Part B: School-Age

- Special Education
- 3 to 21 years old
- Programs ran by LEAs
- OSSE provides oversight
- Individualized Education Program (IEP)



Child Find in the District of Columbia

Part C Child Find Requirements (Birth through Age Two)

BACKGROUND

OSSE, Division of Special Education, DC Early Intervention Program (DC EIP), as the lead agency for Part C, with the advice and assistance of the State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC), is responsible for coordinating the planning and implementation of child find activities for children from birth through age two to ensure that a comprehensive system is in place to identify, locate, and evaluate infants and toddlers who may be eligible to receive Part C early intervention services in the District of Columbia.

OSSE Comprehensive Child Find System Policy, March 22, 2010, p.2
(referencing 34 C.F.R. §§303.301 and 303.302).

Child Find in the District of Columbia

New Part C Regulations

❖ Establishes standards for the District of Columbia Early Intervention Program for infants and toddlers with disabilities.

- Establishes a state-level definition of developmental delay for determining eligibility for early intervention services;
- Sets a timeframe for implementation of the Extended IFSP option;
- Adopts a policy allowing parents to opt out of the disclosure of information about their child to OSSE and DCPS;
- Memorializes current practice adopting IDEA Part B due process hearing practice and procedures and a 45-day timeline for resolution of due process complaints;
- Establishes uniform rates for early intervention services; and
- Offers services to all eligible children in the District of Columbia without taking into account a family's income.

Child Find in the District of Columbia

Part C Child Find Requirements (Birth through Age Two)

LEA Responsibilities

- ❖ Each LEA must have policies and procedures in effect to ensure that all children with disabilities who are in need of special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated.
- ❖ Child Find requirements include activities to assist toddlers and their family, who are eligible for Part C early intervening services, in transitioning to Part B special education preschool services when appropriate.

Child Find in the District of Columbia

PART B Child Find Requirements

(Children age 3 through 21)

❖ LEAs are responsible for:

- Children who attend private schools located in the District even if the children do not reside in the District (including children with disabilities who are enrolled by their parents in private, including religious, elementary and secondary schools).
- Children residing in the District, including children who attend public or private school, are home schooled, are highly mobile and homeless children, are wards of the District, and children who are suspected of having a disability even though they are advancing from grade to grade.

❖ Exception for Public Charter Schools:

- Because LEA charter schools are not neighborhood schools and do not have geographic boundaries, they are only responsible for Child Find activities within their LEA. Therefore, DCPS is responsible for all other Child Find activities for the District of Columbia.

Child Find in the District of Columbia

Child Find for Preschool-Age Children

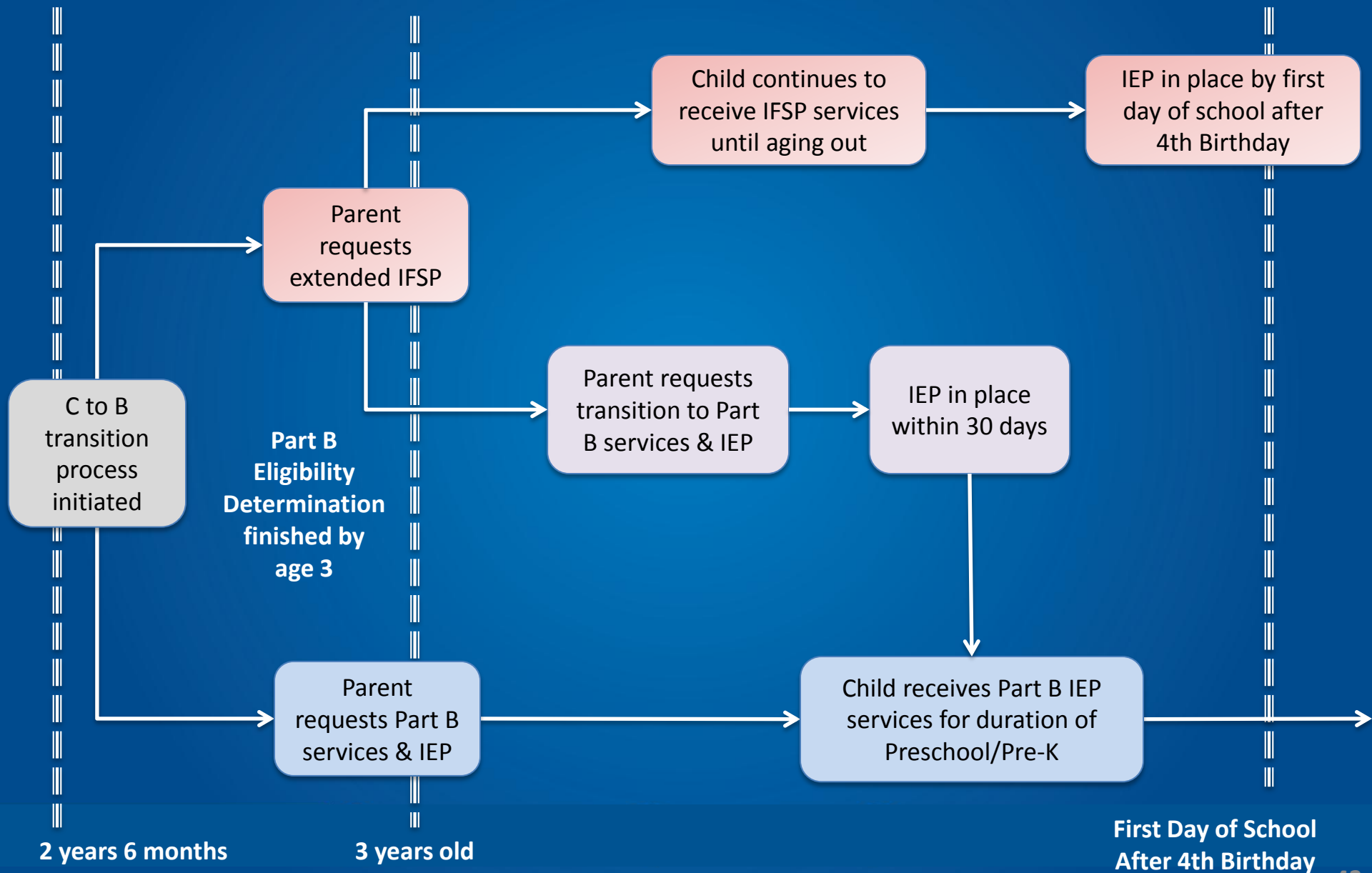
- ❖ DCPS is geographically responsible for Child Find for all preschool-aged children
- ❖ Early Stages is a DC Public Schools diagnostic center for children between the ages of 2 years 8 months and 5 years 10 months.
 - Identifies any developmental delays or disabilities and arranges services to address them.
 - Serves any child who goes to a DC public school, is home-schooled or has not yet entered the school system.
 - Children younger than 2 years 8 months are referred to OSSE Part C Early Intervention.
- ❖ Independent Public Charter Schools are responsible for Child Find for all children enrolled at their LEA.
 - Responsible for identifying developmental delays or disabilities for all children enrolled in their LEA, and for providing subsequent IEP services.

Child Find in the District of Columbia

Extended IFSP Option

- LEA will conduct Part B eligibility determination prior to 3rd birthday for all children with current IFSPs.
- If the child is eligible for Part B services, the parent may elect to extend the IFSP beyond the 3rd birthday, in lieu of Part B IEP services.
- The child will continue to receive IFSP services until a transition event is triggered:
 - Parent requests to begin Part B IEP services at an LEA, OR
 - First day of school after the child's 4th birthday
- Once a child begins IEP services, an IFSP is no longer an option.

Child Find in the District of Columbia



Child Find in the District of Columbia

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)

- Birth to 4 years old
- Early intervention services for the child and the family
- Service coordinator assists family with IFSP process
- Emphasizes natural environment (home, child care, etc.)
- Focused on developmental needs and functional outcome areas:
 - Social, cognitive, communication, physical, emotional, adaptive

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- Ages 3 to 21
- Specialized education & related services
- Focused on educational needs and present levels of academic achievement
- Emphasizes least restrictive environment (LRE)
- Enables student to access and make progress in general education curriculum



CHILD FIND FOR PARENTALLY-PLACED PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Parentally-Placed Private School Students

DCPS's Child Find for Private School Children Includes:

34 C.F.R. §300.131 Child find for parentally-placed private school children with disabilities

(a) General. Each LEA must locate, identify, and evaluate all children with disabilities who are enrolled by their parents in private, including religious, elementary schools and secondary schools located in the school district served by the LEA, in accordance with paragraphs (b) through (e) of this section, and Sec. 300.111 and 300.201.

(b) Child find design. The child find process must be designed to ensure –

- (1) The equitable participation of parentally-placed private school children; and**
- (2) An accurate count of those children.**

(c) Activities. In carrying out the requirements of this section, the LEA, or, if applicable, the SEA, must undertake activities similar to the activities undertaken for the agency's public school children...

Parentally-Placed Private School Students

Private & Religious Schools (PRO) Responsibilities

- ❖ DCPS is geographically responsible for finding all children with disabilities.
- ❖ DCPS has additional responsibilities for:
 - Parentally-placed private school children and must perform the *“same child find activities”* for private/public schools.
 - DCPS Private & Religious Office (PRO)

<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/In+the+Classroom/Special+Education/Children+Who+Attend+a+Private+or+Religious+School>

Additional Resources

- ❖ OSSE Comprehensive Child Find Policy
<http://osse.dc.gov/publication/comprehensive-child-find-system-final-march-22-2010>
- ❖ OSSE Part B Initial Evaluation and Reevaluation Policy
<http://osse.dc.gov/publication/part-b-initial-evaluation-and-reevaluation-policy-final-march-22-2010>
- ❖ OSSE Comprehensive Child Find brochure
<http://osse.dc.gov/publication/child-find-brochure>
- ❖ Strong Start DC Early Intervention Program
<http://osse.dc.gov/service/strong-start-dc-early-intervention-program-dc-eip>
- ❖ District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) Early Stages
<http://www.earlystagesdc.org/>
- ❖ DC Early Intervention Program Regulations: 5 DCMR §§A3100

Thank You

For questions, please contact the
Training and Technical Assistance Unit:

osse.tta@dc.gov

